[*English*]

Expansion of Tea Industry in Sikkim

2511. SHRIMATI D. K. BHANDARI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to expand tea inustry in Sikkim where very good quality of tea is produced;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government have sanctioned any funds for this purpose; and

(c) if so the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Sikkim is declared as non-traditional area for the purpose of financial assistance under Tea Board's New Tea Unit Financing Scheme. However there are no proposals to expand tea industry in Sikkim at present.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Widening of National Highway No. 31-A in Sikkim

2512. SHRIMATI D. K. BHANDARI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to widen the National Highway No. 31-A in Sikkim to provide double lane facility and to ensure free and smooth movement of vehicle of all types ;

(b) if so, the time by when?; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. Current traffic does not justify widening of the National Highway to two-lane standards, and moreover the road passes through geologically unstable areas. Subject to requirements, further improvements on this National Highway will be taken up in the VIII Plan after it is finalised.

Reservation for SCs/STs and other Backward Classes in Public issues

2513. SHRI SOMJIBHAI DAMOR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) Whether the Government propose to provide certain reservation in public issues for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Reservation for Sceduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes out of the public issue of capital is not considered feasible or desirable.

Litigation Branch of D.G.S.&D.

2514. SHRI SOMJIBHAI DAMOR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of cases assigned to the Litigation Branch of the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals to handle arbitration proceedings;

(b) the number of cases where this branch has failed to file any affidavit-in-opposition within the time prescribed by the arbitrators;

(c) the number of cases awaiting award pending over four months, one year, two years, three years and more than three years; and

(d) the steps the Government propose to take to tone up this branch?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) From 1986 onwards, 1010 cases have been referred to arbitration.